

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 11-28 are pending. Claims 11-18 are amended. New Claims 21-28 are added.

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner set forth the following two grounds of rejection:

1. Claims 11-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being anticipated by Nada (U.S. Patent Number 5,172,320); and
2. Claims 11-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being anticipated by Katoh (U.S. Patent Number 5,483,795).

Independent Claims 11 and 16 have been amended to recite that an output signal from the oxygen sensor reaches a setpoint value immediately after the start of the regeneration phase and substantially maintains the setpoint value through the end of the regeneration phase. Oxygen sensor 14 of Nada is not disclosed as having an output signal from the oxygen sensor that reaches a setpoint value immediately after the start of the regeneration phase and substantially maintains the setpoint value through the end of the regeneration phase. Oxygen sensor 22 of Katoh is not disclosed as having an output signal from the oxygen sensor that reaches a setpoint value immediately after the start of the regeneration phase and substantially maintains the setpoint value through the end of the regeneration phase. Accordingly, Claims 11 and 16 are not anticipated by either Nada or Katoh.

Oxygen sensor 14 of Nada is not disclosed as being of all-or-nothing type. Oxygen sensor 22 of Katoh is not disclosed as being of all-or-nothing type. While the Examiner has asserted that both the oxygen sensor 14 of Nada and the oxygen sensor 22 of Katoh are of all-or-nothing type,¹ he has not specifically pointed out where in these patents this teaching is present. Instead, the Examiner references columns of text that do not specifically teach that either oxygen sensor 14 of Nada is of all-or-nothing type or that oxygen sensor 22 of Katoh is of all-or-nothing type. Accordingly, Claims 12 and 17 are not anticipated by either Nada or Katoh.

¹ See Office Action, page 3, second paragraph, and page 4, fifth paragraph.

Dependent Claims 13 and 18 recite that the operating temperature of the oxygen sensor is controlled. Oxygen sensor 14 of Nada is not disclosed as having its operating temperature controlled. Oxygen sensor 22 of Katoh is not disclosed as having its operating temperature controlled. While the Examiner has asserted that both the oxygen sensor 14 of Nada and the oxygen sensor 22 of Katoh have their operating temperature controlled,² he has not specifically pointed out where in these patents these teachings are present. Instead, the Examiner references columns of text that do not specifically teach that either oxygen sensor 14 of Nada has its operating temperature controlled or that oxygen sensor 22 of Katoh has its operating temperature controlled. Accordingly, Claims 13 and 18 are not anticipated by either Nada or Katoh.

New Claims 21 and 25 recite that the control module produces a control signal which is zero prior to the start of the regeneration phase, reaches a first control value immediately after the start of the regeneration phase and substantially maintains this value until the end of reduction of nitrogen oxides by the purifying mechanism, then reaches a second control value, which it substantially maintains until the end of the regeneration phase. This feature is not taught or suggested by either Nada or Katoh.

New Claims 22, 23, 26 and 27 recite that an air intake valve is controlled. This feature is not taught or suggested by either Nada or Katoh.

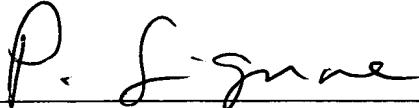
² See Office Action, page 3, third paragraph, and page 4, last paragraph.

Application No. 10/539,612
Reply to Office Action of August 10, 2006

In view of the foregoing, an early and favorable Office Action is believed to be in order and the same is hereby respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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